



Violence and Abuse Injury Brief

Injury Prevention & Control Program

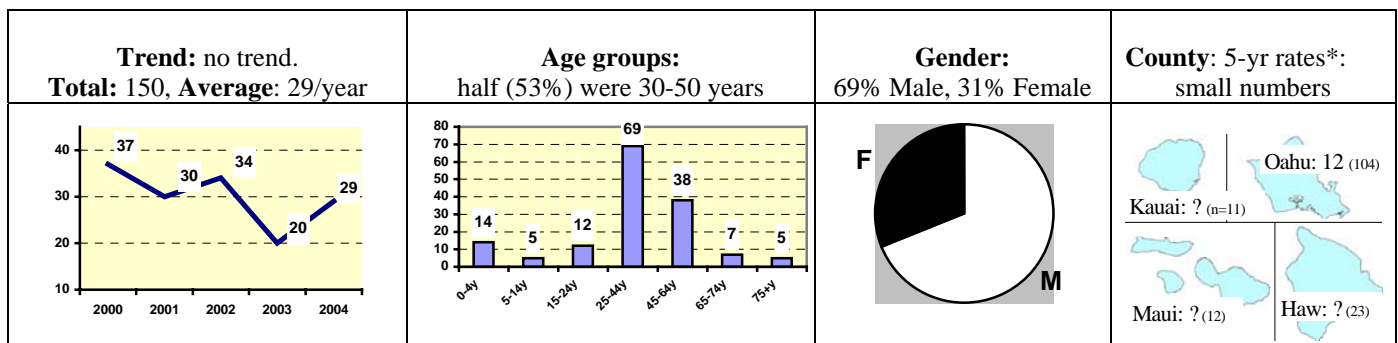
Overview of Homicides

Annual crude rate (1999-2002): 3.0 deaths per 100,000 residents (6.3/100,000 for rest of U.S.)

Hawaii state ranking (1999-2002): 39th highest (LA highest: 12.5/100,000, ME lowest: 1.5/100,000)

Injury ranking (2000-2004): 6th leading cause of fatal injuries

An average of 32 Hawaii residents were murdered each year in Hawaii, with no clear trend over the 2000-2004 period. Half of the victims were 30 to 50 years of age, and this group also had the highest rates of homicide. Five percent (8) of the victims were infants. About two-thirds (69%) of the victims were males. Most (69%) of the homicides occurred on Oahu. There were too few deaths on Neighbor Islands for valid rate comparisons. The most common mechanism of homicide in Hawaii was use of firearms, accounting for 31% of the deaths. That proportion was much higher among homicides in the U.S. as a whole, 64% of which were committed with firearms.



*Unadjusted rates per 100,000 residents over the 2000-2004 period. The number of deaths is shown in parentheses.

Supplemental Homicide Reports from the FBI were linked to the death certificate data for the 1999-2003 period. SHR reports indicate that at least half of the victims (56%) knew their assailant; only 13% were killed by strangers. Most commonly, victims were killed by an acquaintance outside of their families (30%), although the victim-perpetrator relationship varied by gender. Female victims were more likely to be killed by their intimate partners (38%), or other family members (12%), while male victims were more likely to be killed by extra-familial acquaintances (30%) or strangers (18%). Twenty-five (17%) of the victims were intimate partners of the assailant, including 15 spouses (12 wives, 3 husbands), 1 ex-spouse, 7 girlfriends, and 2 boyfriends. Other victims killed by family members included 9 children killed by their parents, and 5 victims who were killed by other family members. Most (85%, or 11 of 13) of the homicides of victims 2 years of age or younger occurred on Oahu.

Non-Fatal Injuries

For every homicide in Hawaii, there are an estimated 3 residents who are hospitalized for assaults and another 21 who are treated in emergency departments. The highest rates for non-fatal assaults were computed for 15 to 24 year-olds (57.3/10,000 per year), of whom 86% were male. Unarmed beatings were the most common (53%) mechanism of assault; firearms were used in only 0.4% of the assaults. Hospital charges averaged over \$11.7 million per year, not including physician charges, which may double the total charge.

Young adults (ages 20-34) also had the highest rates of assault-related injuries that required Oahu EMS treatment (55.7/10,000 per year). Most (83%) of these injuries were graded as “minor,” although 56% of the patients were transported to hospitals. Neighborhoods with the highest numbers and rates of assaults were Waikiki (283 per year), Ala Moana (264), Kalihi-Palama (264), Waianae (177), and Downtown (161).

Risk Factor Data

According to 2001 UCR data, Hawaii had a relatively low rate of violent crime (42nd in the nation). Unlike the rest of the U.S., however, violent crime did not decrease in Hawaii over the 1998-2002 period, and the aggravated assault rate increased significantly over that period. The rate of rape in Hawaii was unchanged over the 1993-2002 period and was roughly comparable to that for the U.S. Almost half (44%) of the male arrestees for assault in 2002 were in the 18-29 year age group, with 30% in the 18 to 24 year age group. Only 16% were 45 years or older. The age distribution for male arrestees for rape was much more widely distributed among the 18-44 year age group (77% were in this age range). Rate of arrests for males for assaults was 4 to 8 times higher than for females at every age group, being most divergent in younger ages.

Thirteen percent of the adult respondent to the 2000 Hawaii Health Survey reported they sustained injuries from physical abuse by their parents or other known adult (boyfriend/girlfriend of parent, etc.) during childhood. Three percent reported a violent experience (being pushed, slapped, hit, punched, kicked, etc.) in the last 12 months, and 1.3% reported being injured from intimate partner violence. Reports of child abuse and recent violence were highest in respondents who identified themselves as Hawaiian (21%), and lowest among the Japanese (5%). Unwanted sexual activity was reported by 0.3% of the female respondents and none of the male respondents.

About one-quarter of high school students surveyed in 2001 in Hawaii reported being in at least one physical fight in the previous year, compared to 33% of all U.S. high school students. That reported proportion decreased annually from 33% in Hawaii in 1995 to 26% in 2001. The percentage of students who carried a weapon in the last 30 days decreased from 18% in 1995 to 11% in 2001, while the proportion who were injured by fighting in remained between 4% and 3% over that period. Carrying weapons and fighting in Hawaii was more commonly reported by male students than females. These behaviors were also progressively less reported across the 9th to 12th grade levels. Ten percent of Hawaii students reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the last 12 months, a proportion that did not vary much by gender.